THE WATER-WITCH.

Inter Ocean Trans. from Emile Souvestre.]
Long ago there lived a young peasant amed William and a pretty young miden named Bella. They loved each ther dearly and would gladly have mared, but they were poor and were forced ogo out to service for a living.
One day William told Bella that he as going into the wide world on the corrow to see if he could meet with any tok.

ella wept, and William consoled her rell as he could, promising to return

Then, "said Bella, "since it must be so in God's name. But first we will be together these valuables which my releft behind him at his death." e brought from a closet a little bell, ife and a staff.

This little bell, "said she, "has the gift beifying by its clear ring the friends e possessor whenever he is in danger, knife has the power of freeing from antment whatever it touches, and the guides one whenever he wishes to I will give you the little bell and the said I will keep myself." Illiam thanked her and bade her fare-Bella looked after him with tearful till he disappeared behind the moun-

In the course of a few days William came to a town in the vicinity of a lake, where he overheard two ass-drivers telking about the water witch on the island in the lake. William inquired who she was, and was told that she was a fairy who was richer than all the kings together. Many people had gone to her abode to get possession of her treasure, but not one had ever returned.

William could not get this story out of his head and he made up his mind to go to the water-witch and see if he could not get enough from her _ust to buy a cow

When the ass-drivers heard this they dout with horror and tried to keep back. But William set off to the a and there met a ferryman who took a over to the island.

lake, and there met a ferryman who took him over to the island.

In the center of the island was a large pood, covered with water lilies in full flower. William walked around the pond and discovered in the rushes a boat in the shape of a sleeping swan with its head under its wing. This William thought very remarkable, and he climbed into the boat in order to examine it. But his feet had no sooner touched the bottom of the boat than the swan seemed to awake, and swan swiftly away from the shore.

William uttered a cry of horror, but the swan swam on, till the young man aprang into the water to make his escape; but the swan drew him down with her to the bottom of the pond.

In this manner he was brought to the dwelling of the water-witch. This was a palace of rare beauty, built entirely of muscle-shells. A crystal staircase led to it, every step of which gave out a musical note as soon as the foot touched it.

The water-witch was reclining on a golden sofa. She was dressed in sea green silk, her long black hair reached down to her feet, and her face was of that delicate red and white which distinguishes the inner surface of the muscle-shell.

The young man stood entranced by her

ty, but the water-witch rose from couch and bade him welcome.

er couch and bade him welcome.

She led him into a second apartment thich was built entirely of pearl, and he placed before him eight golden beakers, with eight different kinds of wine. Then she showed him her countless treasers, and told him that all the precious hings that fell into the sea came into her cossession by means of her magical arts. Villiam was astonished, and he said: Well, one who is so rich is much to be noted. If I had only a thousandth part of these great riches I should be consist.

tent."

"Half of them shall be yours if you wish," said the water-witch. "Remain with me; I will be your wife, and you shall be master of all."

shall be master of all."

The wine was whirling in William's head; he forgot his promise to Bella, and accepted the water-witch's proposal without the least hesitation.

She immediately commenced preparing a delicious repast. She betook herself to a fish-tank in the garden, and called out. "Holla! the Miller! Hollal the Tallor! Holla! the Miller! Hollal the Tallor! Holla! the Clerk!" and so on; and at each cry a little fish came swimming toward her, which she caught in a steel net until her net was full. Then she put the fish into a golden pan and began to fry them.

It seemed to William as if he heard the fish sob while they were frying. "What is that sighing in the golden pan?" he asked.

"It is the wood sighine." said the

asked. "It is the wood sighing," said the

After a while little voices began to hisper. "What is that whispering?" he "The fat hissing in the pan," she an-

now the little voices cried out y. "What is that cry?" said

andibly. "What is that cry?" said
William.

"Those are crickets in the hearth," said
the water-witch, and she immediately be
gan to sing so loud that he could hear
nothing more. She now brought him the
fried fish, begged him to cat, and went to
fetch twelve different kinds of wine.

William drew his knife from his
pocket, and was about to begin; but
hardly had he touched the dish than the
spell of evchantment was broken, and the
fishes rose up and became little men.
They all cried out together: "William,
save us if you would be saved yourself!"

William was astonished "Fray, who
are there little people?" he cried out.

"We are men like yourself," they an
swered. "We came here to get rich: but
the day after our marriage to the waterwitch she changed us into fishes, and
threw us into the great tank."

William gave a spring. He seemed to
feel himself already frying in the golden
pan, and he was fain to make his escape
before the water-witch returned. But she
met him at the door; she had heard all.
She touched him with her wire net, and
changed him into a frog and threw him
into the tank. At this moment the little
bell which he wore on his neck sounded,
and Belia heard the sound, though she
was far away. She uttered a cry of anguish and said, "William is in danger!"

he put on her shoes and her 'sunday
suit at once, hung her little silver cross
around her neck, and staff in hand she
left the house. She wont to a cross roads
and there she stuck the staff, hear me!

"Luttle staff, little staff, hear me!

"Little staff, little staff, hear mei Little staff, little staff, hear me Over stone and stump, Over copse and clump, Over the river, and over the sea, Far away through the air, little staff, carry me!"

Then the staff instantly changed into a saddle-horse, all groomed, saddled and bridled, with a blue plume on its fore-head, and a fluttering ribbon behind each

Bella mounted the horse without de'ay, d he went so swiftly that ditches, trees,

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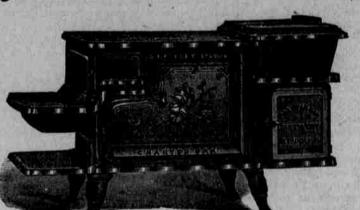
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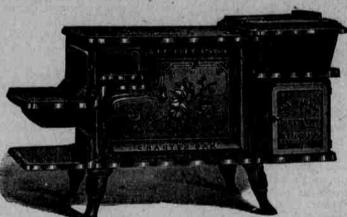
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